# Assignment 2: Mechanic Replacement

## Picking apart common genre mechanics:

Platformer: A platformer typically consists of a player controlled character on a 2d side-view, and has them attempting to go from point A to point B, with death moving the player back to point A or various checkpoints. Some also have life systems, so if the player fails too many times, they have to restart the entire game again. The player character typically only have limited controls: Left, right, jump, crouch, and power-up ability. There are often power-ups, which give the character different ways to solve platform problems by adding manoeuvrability, or the ability to kill or stun enemies.

First Person Shooter: FPS games put the player in the perspective of their character, operating some form of weapon or device (Typically a gun) used to progress the game, whether by overcoming obstacles such as enemies, or puzzles. First person shooters normally use health bar mechanics so the player can take multiple hits, and heal with the use of medical powerups, or simply over time.

Survival: Consists of gathering resources such as food, water and weaponry. Does not typically have a narrative that ends the game upon completion and is instead a continuous game. Often has a base building mechanic.

Text-based Adventure: A game controlled by the player inputting what they want their character to do by a text command, such as “turn on generator” or “enter living room”. Limited by the use of only text to describe environments, these games are often immersive due to their reliance on the player’s memory of object locations and imagination. Text-based games often put the player in a series of puzzles where they have to find the one correct solution.

Rhythm Games: Consists of the player performing certain activities along to a musical track, such as timing hits on some form of input (Notable examples being toy guitars, dancepads, and motion controls) with the closer to the correct time giving the player more points, and missing too many input opportunities resulting in failure of that tune.

Fighting game: Consists of two players, or one player and one AI opponent, fighting one another with selected characters until one of them is defeated by running out of health. Fighting teams normally consist of three differing characters with unique movesets, strengths and weaknesses. Fighting games normally have characters use punches, kicks, jumps, projectiles, blocks and more.

Racing game: Where a player is trying to get to the end goal as fast as possible, similar to a platformer, but typically in 3D third person, and sometimes racing against other players for places. Most often the player is put in control of a vehicle character, used to navigate a course at high speeds.

However there is another type of Racing game, such as Snakes and Ladders, or The Game of the Goose. These racing games don’t have vehicles but simply pieces on a board that the player moves around based on a random roll of a dice. However, for this development, when I refer to a race game I am talking about the former definition.

## Picking a genre and removing a mechanic:

By removing combat from a fighting system (i.e. punching, kicking, projectiles and other common forms of attacks) the player loses the ability to inflict damage against an opponent, and vice versa. With traditional combat not being an option a replacement must be devised.

A possible solution is adding in a different form of combat, such as completing rhythm sets, with your score being dealt as damage to the opponent. However, these couldn’t be traditional health bars, since if both players kept getting perfect scores; they’d keep drawing by defeating one another at the same beat. A solution could be that instead of dealing damage to an opponent, if they mistimed a beat, damage dealt being scaled to how much they missed.

This practically changes the game from a fighting game with a replacement combat mechanic, to a rhythm game with a replacement victory mechanic.

Another solution could be to make the characters have ragdoll physics. Often used to replace death animations, ragdolling is where a character is made limp, and then is put under force such as artificial gravity. Using these ragdolled characters and flinging them at one another in order to push each other into an environmental hazard could work. Characters could take damage based on the hazard, and how long they’re in it for.

Removing typical movement controls from a racing game can have a similar solution:

By having a player race around a map by throwing the character around introduces uncertainty not normally present in racing games.

Maybe making the player solve different puzzles in order to move their character forward, or to speed them up. Puzzles could range from trivia, to logic puzzles, to even math questions.

An even simpler solution could be turning it into a quick time event system, where the player has to press buttons as they appear on the screen in order to speed up their vehicle towards the goal.

Removing the traditional goal from a race game can offer interesting alternatives for finishing criteria, such as surviving the course longer than other players or the AI. This would turn the game into more of an obstacle course, as the goal wouldn’t be to reach the end first, but to survive the longest.

Finally a racing game where the objective is to collect a certain number of items in order to win, continuously having to go around the track until collecting enough items.

## Selected plausible mechanic alterations

1. A fighting game without combat: Instead the player has to fling their character around the arena at opponents to try and shove opponents into environmental hazards to take away their health. Such hazards include: Spikes, lava pits, acid pits, mines, crushers. Different selectable characters could have different characteristics such as more health for less push force, or lighter characters for less health in exchange. There are also multiple stages that have different abilities, such as gravity pads or moving platforms.
2. A race game where the goal is replaced with collecting a certain number of items instead. The player has to race around a track or environment collecting enough/all of the items before the others do. If this doesn’t work out a replacement could be having it a set track that you only get to go around twice, collecting as many items as possible and the player with the most items at the end wins. The player in last place should be given a speed boost, or slow down, or some form of catch-up mechanic.